



GOVERNANCE POLICY & PROCEDURES

Approved at a Church Members' Meeting on __ / __ / __

Church Governance Policy and Procedures: Statement of Beliefs

BAPTIST CHURCHES OF NSW & ACT

Statement of Beliefs

As approved by the 1979 Assembly and amended by 2002 and 2003 Assemblies.

1. THE NATURE AND UNITY OF THE GODHEAD

There is one God Who is eternal personal Spirit. He is infinite in power, wisdom, holiness and love. God is Triune in essential being and revealed to us as Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

2. THE DEITY AND HUMANITY OF CHRIST

Jesus Christ as the second Person of the Godhead is eternally one with God the Father of whose person and glory Jesus is the accurate expression. To become human He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary, so that two whole and perfect natures, the nature of God and human nature, were united in one Person; truly God and truly human.

3. THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Holy Spirit as the third Person of the Trinity is eternally one with the Father and the Son yet He is sent by Them to achieve the divine purpose in the world and in the Church.

4. THE DIVINE INSPIRATION OF THE SCRIPTURES

The Scriptures, consisting of the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments, are the infallible Word of God. They were written by holy people of God inspired by the Holy Spirit and have supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct.

5. THE SINFULNESS OF PEOPLE

People were made in the image of God and for fellowship with God. By transgression of God's command humankind fell from fellowship with God and their nature was corrupted. As a consequence all people are spiritually dead under Satan's dominion and control and subject to God's wrath and condemnation. Therefore, apart from God's grace, people are helpless and hopeless.

6. CHRIST'S ATONEMENT FOR THE HUMAN SIN

In order to redeem people from the guilt, penalty and power of sin, Jesus Christ became human and died a sacrificial death as our representative substitute. By His resurrection, God's acceptance of His atoning death was demonstrated. This atonement is sufficient for the whole world, but effective only in those who receive it. The sinner is justified and reconciled to God, not through any personal merit, but solely on the basis of God's gracious gift of salvation in Jesus Christ received through faith.

7. THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN SALVATION

The ministry of the Holy Spirit is necessary for the acceptance of God's provision of salvation. The Holy Spirit convinces sinners of their sinfulness, leads them to personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour and so brings them to spiritual birth as God's children and to fellowship in Christ. Working within the life of believers the Holy Spirit makes real the presence of Christ, witnesses to their relationship with God, leads into all truth, bestows gifts for effective service and produces graces for holy living.

8. THE CHURCH

The Church is the body of people whom God has separated from the world through faith in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour. All regenerate persons are members of the universal Church of God which takes local form wherever groups of believers unite for worship, fellowship and service in accordance with scriptural principles. All believers are called to a priestly ministry in the offering of spiritual sacrifices and sent into the world to be witnesses. God calls individuals to positions of oversight and leadership or to special ministries. The Church recognises such by ordaining pastors, commissioning missionaries, appointing deacons and other leaders, following New Testament practice.

9. THE BAPTISM OF BELIEVERS ONLY BY IMMERSION

Baptism is an ordinance of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is a public declaration of a person's faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. In accordance with New Testament Scripture it should be administered only by total immersion which symbolises the believer's identification with Christ in death, burial and resurrection, the remission of sins and the believer's dedication of himself or herself to God to live and walk in newness of life.

10. THE COMMUNION

The Lord's Supper is an ordinance of the Lord Jesus Christ instituted by Him to be celebrated with the elements of bread and wine by believers in Christ until the end of the age. It commemorates and declares our thanks for the Lord's substitutionary death. The celebration of the ordinance expresses our fellowship with and in the Lord Jesus Christ as members of the Body of which He is the Head.

11. THE RETURN OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST

At the end of this age, according to His promise, Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in His glory to the earth. The full consummation of the Kingdom of God awaits His return.

12. THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD

At the end of the age, there is to be a resurrection both of the righteous and the unrighteous. After death people's bodies return to dust, but their spirits return immediately to God - the righteous to be with Him and the unrighteous to be reserved for the judgment.

13. REWARDS AND PUNISHMENTS IN A FUTURE STATE

God has appointed a day of final judgement for the world. At that time Jesus Christ will judge every person and each will receive reward or punishment according to their deeds. Those judged righteous, in their resurrected and glorified bodies, will receive their reward and will dwell forever in Heaven with the Lord. The unrighteous will be consigned to Hell, the place of everlasting punishment.

Church Governance Policy and Procedures: Appointment of Pastors

Senior Pastor

- Any person to be appointed as Senior Pastor is to:
 - Subscribe to the Doctrinal Basis of the Baptist Churches of NSW and ACT
 - Be accredited or recognised by the Baptist Churches of NSW and ACT as having been set apart for ministry
- The church is to appoint a Pastoral Search Committee to identify a person whom the Committee believes God has led us to make a call to become the Senior Pastor.
- The Pastoral Search Committee is to follow the procedure to select and call a Senior Pastor as outlined by the Baptist Churches of NSW and ACT.
- The Pastoral Search Committee is to bring one person's name at a time to the church for the appointment to the role of Senior Pastor.
- The calling of the Senior Pastor is to be decided at a Special Meeting of the Church, where 75% or more of the active and current members present at the meeting agree to call the person to be the Senior Pastor.
- The Senior Pastor is to become a member when inducted into the role of Senior Pastor.
- The Senior Pastor is to be encouraged by the church to attend appropriate training courses for professional and personal development.
- The Senior Pastor is to be supported to meet with an accredited mentor/supervisor at least three times per year to fulfil accreditation/recognition requirements of the Baptist Churches of NSW and ACT
- The Senior Pastor is to be provided office equipment and supplies to fulfil their role.
- The Senior Pastor may terminate their appointment by giving two months notice to the Church Secretary.
- The Senior Pastor may be removed from his or her appointment on two months notice by the Church, if a motion is passed at a specially convened meeting of members by a secret ballot, where 75% or more of the active and current members vote to terminate the appointment.
- The Senior Pastor is to undergo an Annual Staff Review conducted by the Deacons

Pastoral Team Members

- A person may be called by the church to be called as a Pastoral Team Member by either:
 - Forming a Pastoral Search Committee to identify a person the Committee believes God has led them to call as a Pastoral Team Member
 - The Ministry Council recommends a person to the church to call a Pastoral Team Member and the Senior Pastor has agreed the person should become part of the Pastoral Team
- The church is to appoint a Pastoral Search Committee to identify a person whom the Committee believes God has led us to make a call to become the Senior Pastor.
- The Pastoral Search Committee is to follow the procedure to select and call a pastoral team member as outlined by the Baptist Churches of NSW and ACT.
- The Pastoral Search Committee is to bring one person's name at a time to the church for the appointment to the role of a pastoral team member.
- The calling of a pastoral team member is to be decided at a Special Meeting of the Church, where 75% or more of the active and current members present at the meeting agree to call the person to be a pastoral team member.
- The Pastoral Team Member, if not already a church member, is to be appointed a church member when inducted into their role.
- The pastoral team member is to be encouraged by the church to attend appropriate training courses for professional and personal development.
- The pastoral team member is to be supported to meet with an accredited mentor/supervisor at least three times per year to fulfil accreditation/recognition requirements of the Baptist Churches of NSW and ACT
- The pastoral team member is to be provided office equipment and supplies to fulfil their role.
- A Pastoral Team Member may terminate their appointment by giving two months notice to the Church Secretary.
- A Pastoral Team Member may be removed from their appointment on two months notice by the Senior Pastor after consultation and approval by the deacons, or by the church, if a motion is passed at a specially convened meeting of members by a secret ballot where 75% or more of active and current members vote at the meeting to terminate the appointment.

Church Governance Policy and Procedures: Senior Pastor Roles and Responsibilities

- The roles and responsibilities of the Senior Pastor are to:
 - Provide overall leadership and oversight of the Pastoral team, Staff, Ministry Council and church family
 - Have the responsibility for the leading, preaching and pastoral care of the English congregation and others in need of support and encouragement
 - Inspire and encourage the church to learn and grow in their faith through clearly communicating Scripture and its implications relevant to the lives of the Church community
 - Oversee an annual preaching roster for all congregations and ministries
 - Develop and is to develop and maintain a detailed role description for each member of the Pastoral Team and staff in consultation with the Pastoral Team member of staff member
 - Work with the Leadership team (Pastors, Staff, Deacons and Ministry Council) to lead the whole church in ensuring smooth operation of all church activities, strategic planning and vision implementation
 - Develop and maintain a detailed role description for each member of the Pastoral Team and staff in consultation with the Pastoral Team member or staff member.
 - Conduct an Annual Staff Review for each staff member

Church Governance Policy and Procedures: Associate Pastor and Staff Worker Roles and Responsibilities

- The roles and responsibilities of each of the Associate Pastors and Staff workers are to:
 - Assist the Senior Pastor in providing spiritual leadership of the Church in areas of specialised ministry
 - Encourage and support the team of leaders in their specialised ministry area and other ministry areas as required
 - Work with the Leadership team (Senior Pastor, Pastors, Staff, Deacons and Ministry Council) to lead the whole church in ensuring the smooth operation of all church activities, strategic planning and vision implementation
 - Attend and participate in Pastoral team meetings, Staff Meetings, Deacons meetings, Ministry Council meetings and other meetings in church life as required
 - Participate in an Annual Staff Review by the Senior Pastor or his appointed representative

Church Governance Policy and Procedures: Church Governance Policy

The Church is to be affiliated with the Baptist Churches of NSW & ACT accepting its responsibility to support and share ministries undertaken by the Denomination. The decision-making of the Church is to be vested in the body of believers who compose its membership.

Pastors

- The Senior Pastor and Associate Pastors are responsible for the general pastoral oversight of the Church with the Senior Pastor also responsible for imparting the vision and direction of the Church.
- The Senior Pastor and Associate Pastors are each to be elected or removed only upon a vote passed by 75% of those active and current members present at a Church meeting called for that purpose, of which notice has been given.
- The Church Secretary is to preside at all Deacons meetings which is are to meet at least monthly. In the event of the Church Secretary not being available, the Senior Pastor, or their appointed representative, is to preside at the meeting.

Deacons

- The Deacons are responsible for the following:
 - Oversight of the church including strategic planning and spiritual health in association with the vision from the Senior Pastor.
 - Encouragement, support and prayer for the Senior Pastor, Associate Pastors, and ministry team leaders.
 - Administrative and financial oversight of the church.
 - Liaison with various ministry team leaders to support and encourage them in their ministry and to share the vision and direction for the church.
- The Deacons are empowered to transact all ordinary business of the Church, and are to report such business, as required, to the Church.
- The team of Deacons is to consist of a Church Secretary, who is to be also be the church Public Officer, a Church Treasurer, who is to manage and report on church finances, with a minimum of 3 deacons and maximum of 5 deacons.
- The election of Deacons is to take place at the Annual Church Meeting (vacancies can be filled at Quarterly Church meetings or Special meetings as required) and the following procedures followed:
 - Nominations for vacancies are to normally be invited from the Church at least 4 Sundays prior to the date of the meeting
 - All nominations are to be in writing, indicating the specific role for which the nomination is being made
 - The completed nomination, signed by two nominators and the person nominated, is to be in the hands of the Church Secretary, or their appointed representative, no later than 2 weeks before the date of the meeting and the names of all persons nominated is to be provided in the church newsletter produced for the week before the meeting
 - Each Deacon is to be appointed for a period of three years.
 - Retirement of a Deacon is to take place after 6 years of service in that role and the Deacon retiring can not be re-appointed for at least 2 years after their retirement.
 - If a Deacon steps down part way through their nominated term, any replacement is to be only be appointed for the remainder of the original term but will be eligible for renomination at the next ACM.
 - The names of all persons nominated as a Deacon are to be listed on the ballot paper indicating the role for which they have been nominated.
- The appointment of Deacons is to be by secret ballot and a person is to only be appointed to the position, where 75% or more of the active and current members vote for the appointment. Where there is more than one nomination for a particular role, the person who obtains the most votes in the initial secret ballot is to be appointed if they receive above the 75% required. If the church does not elect a person in the initial secret ballot, the person receiving the most votes is to be put to the meeting in a second secret ballot and appointed if they receive more than 75% of the votes required.
- The Deacons may call a Church meeting, with notification to each member at least fifteen days prior to the meeting and by announcement at each service on the two preceding Sundays.

Ministry Council

- The Ministry Council members are to include appointed leaders for specific ministry areas of the church and leaders are responsible for the following:
 - Oversight of the ministry area in line with the church vision and mission
 - Appoint suitable leadership for each ministry the Church establishes or supports
 - Encourage and support volunteer ministry leaders and helpers
 - Act in accordance with the constitution and policy and procedures and bring updates and reports to the leadership team meetings and Church meetings as required
- The election of Ministry Council members is to take place at the Annual Church Meeting (vacancies can be filled at Quarterly Church meetings or Special meetings as required) and the following procedures followed:
 - Nominations for vacancies are to be normally be invited from the Church at least 4 Sundays prior to the date of the meeting
 - All nominations are to be in writing, indicating the specific role for which the nomination is being made
 - The completed nomination, signed by two nominators and the person nominated, is to be in the hands of the Church Secretary, or their appointed representative, no later than 2 weeks before the date of the meeting and the names of all persons nominated will be provided in the church newsletter produced for the week before the meeting
 - Each Ministry Council member is to be appointed for a period of three years.
 - Retirement of each Ministry Council member will take place after 6 years of service as a Ministry Council member and that person retiring can not be re-appointed for at least 2 years after their retirement.
 - If a Ministry Council member steps down part way through their nominated term, any replacement is only to be appointed for the remainder of the original term but will be eligible for renomination at the next ACM.
 - The names of all persons nominated as Ministry Council members are to be listed on the ballot paper indicating the role for which they have been nominated.
 - The appointment of each Ministry Council member is to be by secret ballot and a person is to only be appointed to the position, where 75% or more of the active and current members vote for the appointment. Where there is more than one nomination for a particular role, the person who obtains the most votes in the initial secret ballot is to be appointed if they receive above the 75% required. If the church does not elect a person in the initial secret ballot, the person receiving the most votes is to be put to the meeting in a second secret ballot and appointed if they receive more than 75% of the votes required.
- The Ministry Council is to meet at least quarterly.

Safe Church Team

- A Safe Church team is to be appointed by a church meeting to oversee and implement the approved church Safe Church Policies to meet the safe church requirements of the Baptist Churches of NSW and ACT.
- Members of the Safe Church Team is to include the following:
 - Senior Pastor
 - Deacon
 - Youth/Young Adults Worker
 - Children's Worker
 - At least two church representatives

Leadership Team

- The Leadership Team, which is to consist of Pastors, Deacons and Ministry Council members, is to meet at least 4 times per year.

Church Governance Policy and Procedures: Church Membership

Becoming a Church Member

- 1) Those who apply to become members of the church are to be visited by two current members of the church appointed for this purpose by the Leadership Team. The two people visiting the person are to prepare a written report for the Leadership Team containing a recommendation as to whether the person should join us as a member of our Church. If the report indicates support for membership, the Leadership Team is to recommend the names of people who have been visited to the church meeting.
- 2) People may become members of the church as follows
 - a) Those who profess their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and have been baptised by immersion and uphold the Statement of Faith (**Refer to Policy and Procedures: Statement of Beliefs**) and understand the responsibilities and privileges of being a Church member, may be accepted for membership.
 - b) Those who have not been baptised by immersion but wish to become a member must give a reasonable explanation as to why that belief has not been put into practice. They must uphold the Statement of Faith (**Refer to Policy and Procedures: Statement of Beliefs**) and understand the responsibilities and privileges of being a Church member to be accepted for membership. (**NB.**, Members who have not been baptised as a believer are not eligible for appointment to the Leadership Team, as a delegate of the church to an Assembly of the Baptist Churches of NSW & ACT, and are not entitled to vote on any resolution proposed for the purpose of giving the Baptist Churches of New South Wales Property Trust a direction under Section 42 of the Baptist Churches of New South Wales Property Trust Act 1984).
 - c) If a member in good standing wishes to join another Baptist Church, such church upon request, may be granted a letter commending the member to its fellowship.
 - d) All applications for membership are to be submitted to the Leadership Team and brought to the Church Members' Meeting for final approval.
 - e) A Membership Roll is to be maintained by the Church Secretary. It should identify members who are under 18 years of age. Only members who are 18 years of age and over and have been baptised by full immersion, can be appointed as a delegate of the church to an Assembly of the Baptist Churches of New South Wales and ACT, and are entitled to vote on any resolution proposed for the purpose of giving the Baptist Churches of New South Wales Property Trust a direction under Section 42 of the Baptist Churches of New South Wales Property Trust Act 1984.
 - f) The Leadership Team is to review the Membership Roll at least annually and bring to the Church Members' Meeting any recommendation for the removal of a name from the roll.

Ceasing to be a Church Member

- 1) A person may resign from being a member of Carlingford Baptist Church by giving notice to the Church Secretary.
- 2) If a person has not attended the church or communicated with the church for six months, their name may be removed from the roll of members, where the Deacons consider this is an appropriate action.
- 3) If a person is involved in conduct that is inconsistent with a Christian confession and witness, they may be visited by persons appointed by the Leadership Team who is to seek in the spirit of love and mercy to restore them to the fellowship (**Refer to Policy and Procedures: Church Conflict Resolution Policy**).
 - a) If after the visitation, the conduct being addressed continues, the member may be visited again by others appointed by the Leadership Team.
 - b) If after the two visits, the member is not restored to the fellowship, the matter may be brought to a meeting of the Church to decide to terminate or suspend from being a member.
 - c) The decision to suspend or terminate membership is to be on the decision of at least 75% of the members at the meeting who choose to vote and the meeting is to be conducted applying the principles of natural justice.

Church Governance Policy and Procedures: Church Finance Policy

Finance

- 1) The Church Treasurer, with the assistance of the Mission Team Leaders, is to ensure that complete and accurate financial records are kept. This includes every ministry associated with the Church that receives funding from the Church.
- 2) An independent review of the annual financial statement by a registered auditor, accountant or similarly qualified person is to be provided to the church at the annual church meeting.
- 3) Any withdrawal or transfer from church bank accounts, is to be authorised by at least 2 people appointed by the Deacons.
- 4) The Church Treasurer is to prepare financial statements about the financial position of the Church and is to provide a report on the financial position of the Church to each church meeting.
- 5) The Church Treasurer with the assistance of a Finance committee (appointed by the Deacons and reported to the Church meeting), is to prepare a budget of proposed expenditure of the Church for each financial year.
- 6) The budget is to be approved by the church before the commencement of the relevant financial year.
- 7) The Deacons are authorised to incur expenses on the specific items identified in the budget up to the amounts approved by the church meeting.
- 8) If proposed expenditure is expected to be more than 10% above the amount identified in the budget for that item, the church meeting is to approve the additional expenditure.
- 9) If proposed expenditure is outside the budget for the year, complete records are to be maintained of the expenditure and if the expenditure is more than 10% above the amount determined to be spent, the church is to approve the additional expenditure.
- 10) The Church Treasurer, with the Finance Committee, are to develop and review the processes they use at least annually, and have them ratified by the Deacons at least annually, to ensure accountability.

Insurance

- 1) The Deacons are to arrange adequate insurance relating to:
 - a) the assets of the Church, including the buildings and contents
 - b) workers compensation for employees and voluntary workers
 - c) public liability
 - d) professional indemnity
 - e) any other risks the Deacons consider should be insured against
- 2) The Deacons are to review the insurances each year and are to report to the annual general meeting the arrangements for insurance that are in place at that time.
- 3) The Deacons are to regularly review Work Health Safety matters to ensure compliance with the Work Health Safety requirements and the safety of our people.

Church Governance Policy and Procedures: Church Meeting Procedures

Church Meetings

- 1) The Senior Pastor is to preside at all meetings of the Church. In the event of the Senior Pastor not being available, the Church meeting will elect one of the Leadership Team to preside. The leadership team may on occasions invite a chairperson from outside of the church to preside at Church Meetings.
- 2) Church meetings are to usually be held as a physical meeting at the church premises. In the event of circumstances preventing a physical meeting, a meeting can be held as virtual meeting using technology available for that purpose. The technology platform must provide members a reasonable opportunity to participate in the meeting. Anyone who attends the meeting via this platform is taken to be present in person at the meeting
- 3) All members present at a Church meeting are entitled to one vote. Where voting is connected with the sale or purchase of property or property held in trust for the Church, the entitlement to vote is to be in accordance with the provisions of the Baptist Churches of NSW Property Trust Act 1984.
- 4) The vote of the Church is to ordinarily be taken by show of hands, or a calling of 'yes' or 'no'.
- 5) The voting relative to the election/removal of a Pastor or member of the Leadership Team is to be by secret ballot.
- 6) Secret ballot may also be used on other occasions the Church or Leadership Team may request.
- 7) When secret ballots are held, the church is to appoint 2 scrutineers to tally the votes and report to the meeting once the ballots have been counted.
- 8) At Church Meetings the following is to generally be the matters for discussion:
 - a) Acceptance of agenda
 - b) Confirmation of minutes
 - c) Business arising out of minutes
 - d) Presentation and adoption of ministry reports including financial statements
 - e) Election of members of the Leadership Team (Annual Church Meeting or Special Church Meeting only)
 - f) General business
 - g) Correspondence
 - h) Membership
- 9) The Senior Pastor is to be ex-officio leader of all ministries and organisations connected with the Church but may delegate this role to other members of the Leadership Team as the need arises.
- 10) Minutes of all meetings are to be kept to record decisions made. Copies of the minutes are to be available to members prior to the next church meeting and meeting minutes kept according to the requirements of the Baptist Churches of NSW and ACT.

Changes to Constitution

- 1) The constitution is to be reviewed every six years under the oversight of the Church Secretary who is to then bring any proposed changes to a specially convened meeting.
- 2) To change the constitution, a notice of a meeting is to be given no less than two months before the date of the meeting where the changes are to be considered.
- 3) Notice of the wording of the proposed changes is to be made available four Sundays before the meeting is to be held to consider the changes.
- 4) Notice is to also be given orally during each of the church services on the two Sundays before the meeting.
- 5) No change to constitution is to be made except by the approval of at least 75% of the members at the meeting who choose to vote at a specially convened meeting to consider the changes to the constitution.